

SIKKIM

GOVERNMENT



GAZETTE

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**GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
DEPARTMENT OF FOREST, ENVIRONMENT AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT**

NOTIFICATION

No:169/GOS/FEWMD/Pr. Secy- PCCF

Dated: 3/10/2015

Whereas the Department of Forest, Environment and Wildlife Management, Government of Sikkim (hereinafter referred to as the Forest Department) has initiated a number of initiatives to promote conservation and protection of wild animals, birds and plants in the State;

And whereas the protected areas in the State have immense environmental, ecological, cultural, spiritual and economic importance;

And whereas the protected areas in Sikkim are important for minimization of adverse impact on natural processes by human acts;

And whereas impacts such as fire, poaching, diseases, timber felling, removal of dead wood, contamination from toxics and pollution pose serious threats due to human activity;

And whereas most of the protected areas are located in remote areas and the long term future of these protected areas is largely dependent on the active participation and involvement of the local community;

And whereas there is a need to directly involve the Ecodevelopment Committees which is a registered body at the village level formed for a village or a cluster of villages situated adjacent to National Park or Wildlife Sanctuaries in conservation effort and decision making process.

Now therefore, in pursuance of paragraph 2.3 of Chapter VIII of the National Wildlife Action Plan 2002-16, the State Government is hereby pleased to notify that all the tourism receipts and penalties collected in the Protected Areas (as defined in the Indian Forest Act, 1927) shall be vested in a Local Trust Fund operated by Joint Committees headed by the Divisional Forest Officer (Wildlife) of the concerned Protected Area and the fund will be appropriated as 70% to the community benefits and 30% for park management or development activity.

1. Constitution of the Committee for collection and management of Local Trust Fund⁹

- (1) There shall be constituted a committee for the purpose of collection and management of Local Trust Fund which shall be called the Local Trust Fund Committee, consisting of the following members namely:-
 - (a) The Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) shall be the Chairman for the Local Trust Fund Committee.
 - (b) President of the existing Eco Development Committee shall be the President for the Local Trust Fund Committee.
 - (c) Concerned Range Officer (RO) shall be the Member Secretary for the Local Trust fund Committee.
 - (d) The members of the existing Eco development Committees shall be the members for the Local Trust Fund Committee.
- (2)
 - (a) The Local Trust Fund shall be operated jointly by Divisional Forest Officer (Wildlife) of concerned protected area, Member Secretaries and Eco development Committee President.
 - (b) A treasurer shall be appointed from amongst the Executive Body members of Eco Development Committees.

2. Revenue Collection for Local Trust Fund

- (1) The tourism receipts and penalties collected in a protected area shall be deposited in the Local Trust Fund.
- (2) There shall be separate account in a Nationalised Bank or a Cooperative Bank or a Post Office for Local Trust Fund.
- (3) The Local Trust Fund will be operated by the Divisional Forest Officer (Wildlife), Member Secretary and President.
- (4) The fund collected shall be appropriated in the ratio of 70:30, wherein 70% shall be utilized for the community benefits and 30% shall be managed by the Divisional Forest Officer (Wildlife) for park management and development activity.
- (5) The fund flow details of the Local Trust Fund shall be monitored on the quarterly basis by the Chairman.
- (6) The President of Eco Development Committee and Member Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining the 70% of local trust fund and submission of annual audit reports from a statutory auditor to the Divisional Forest Officer and the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests cum Secretary of the Forest Department.
- (7) The Divisional Forest Officer (Wildlife) shall be responsible for the management of 30% of local trust fund for park management and development activity.
- (8) An account book for the income and expenditure of the Local Trust Fund shall be maintained at the Division Office for 30% and the Member Secretary at the Range Office for 70% Local Trust Fund.
- (9) The Member Secretary shall submit the report on fund flow on quarterly basis to the Division office.

3. DUTIES

The duties of the Local Trust Fund Committee shall be,

- (1) to ensure protection of forests, environment and wildlife;
- (2) to bring to the notice of the Forest Department of any kind of restricted activities in the protected areas;
- (3) to carry out awareness and education drives, for sensitizing and capacity building of the local community for nature conservation;
- (4) to undertake immunization of domestic animals in the fringe villages;
- (5) to undertake various fire protection measures in the form of creation of fire lines and fire brakes, procuring fire control equipments, advance early burning and other such fire control practices, participatory fire management by involving local people, etc;
- (6) to provide assistance and statistics as and when required by the Forest Department.
- (7) to undertake habitat improvement activities like enrichment plantings, assisted natural regeneration, raising plantations of indigenous and fodder species, development of grasslands, meadows and wetlands, etc;
- (8) to undertake various water harvesting or retention activities and structures;
- (9) to hire vehicles for patrolling, etc;
- (10) to publish education materials, conduct awareness activities and nature education.

4. POWERS

The Local Trust Fund committee shall have the power to decide the works and activities where the funds will be utilized. The plan of action for the particular period should be prepared by the committee in consultation with the Assistant Conservator of Forests (Wildlife). However, the plan shall be approved by the Chairman.

5. DISSOLUTION AND APPOINTMENT

- 1) The Divisional Forest Officer shall have power to take appropriate action and shall remove the member from the Committee by passing a resolution.
- 2) Any vacancy in the office of a member shall be filled by fresh appointment and such member shall continue for the remainder of the term of the member in whose place he is appointed.

Dr. Thomas Chandu
PCCF-cum-Principal Secretary
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